

PMM II

DECISION



**THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

10,670

FILE: B-193499

DATE: June 28, 1979

PER DIEM and

MATTER OF: Clinton Bastin - International
Date Line crossing]

DIGEST: In computing per diem in cases where the traveler crosses the International Date Line (180th meridian), the actual elapsed time must be used rather than calendar days. Where an employee travels around the world, a compensating 24-hour adjustment in per diem in addition to the International Date Line adjustment is to be made upon completion of the travel.

This action is in response to a letter dated November 15, 1978, from the Authorized Certifying Officer of the Department of Energy, requesting an advance decision on the claim of Clinton Bastin as to the proper computation of per diem when crossing the International Date Line traveling eastward.

Mr. Bastin, an employee of the Department of Energy was issued a travel authorization covering official travel from Washington, D.C., to London, Bombay, Hong Kong, and return to Washington, D.C. He departed Washington on September 25, 1977, traveling around the world, and returning to Washington, D.C., on October 3, 1977.

October 3, 1977, began for Mr. Bastin in Hong Kong having arrived there the previous day, October 2, 1977, at 10:50 a.m. from Bombay. He departed Hong Kong at 9 a.m. (Hong Kong time), October 3, 1977, and arrived in Washington, D.C., at 9:45 p.m. (E.D.T.) on October 3, 1977. In his travel voucher Mr. Bastin claimed eight quarters (2 days) of per diem on October 3, the day he crossed the International Date Line. A deduction of \$6 (one day's per diem at the en route rate) was made from his voucher for the additional four quarters claimed. Mr. Bastin's Reclaim Voucher disputes the disallowance of four quarters for October 3, 1977, citing our decision 39 Comp. Gen. 853 (1960).

Federal Travel Regulations (FTR) (FPMR 101-7) (1973), par. 1-7.6c(3) provides:

"International dateline. In computing per diem in cases where the traveler crosses the international

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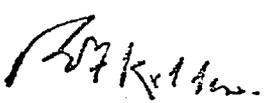
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dateline (180th meridian), the actual elapsed time shall be used rather than calendar days."

In 39 Comp. Gen. 853 we held, in effect, that the intent of that provision of the travel regulations (section 6.6 of the Standardized Government Travel Regulations at that time) could be implemented by making a 24-hour adjustment on any day an employee crosses the International Date Line on official travel. The complexities involved in the various situations involving the International Date Line were recognized, but it was pointed out that making a 24-hour adjustment for crossing would permit the use of local time for computation of per diem during the remainder of the traveler's temporary duty or travel status.

The effect of traveling around the world was not discussed in that decision. Whereas traveling across the International Date Line and back results in compensating 24-hour International Date Line adjustments in travel per diem, travel around the world involves only one International Date Line adjustment. However, with this single adjustment the elapsed time of a trip around the world will not equal the number of days for which per diem is paid. In Mr. Bastin's case, traveling eastward, and making a 24-hour adjustment for the International Date Line results in payment of per diem for a day more than the traveler was actually away from his headquarters. The opposite results if travel around the world in a westwardly direction. Therefore, in order to make the total per diem for an around the world trip equal the total number of days the employee is away from his headquarters, a compensating 24-hour around the world travel adjustment must be made upon completion of the trip. In this case the 24-hour International Date Line crossing adjustment at the \$6 travel per diem rate would be canceled by the 24-hour around the world adjustment at the \$6 travel per diem rate.

Action on the Reclaim Voucher should be taken accordingly.


Acting Comptroller General
of the United States